

RUSSIA AND THE WEST IN IRAN

could be done in certain areas without the approval or co-operation of the tribes. With regard to those foreign powers with special interests in Iran, such a state of affairs necessitated a second diplomacy, that of tribal relations, in addition to the normal Teheran diplomacy conducted on government levels. In fact, each contender for influence in the Middle East was compelled to reckon with this powerful tribal factor.

The Iranian government had to face the tribal problem following the Anglo-Soviet invasion. Both in the British and in the Soviet zones some tribes revolted. The government attempted to bring them to submission. In the south the powerful tribe of Qashqais, led by two members of the old Ilkhani family, Nasir and Khosro Khans, rebelled in the spring of 1943. The tribe demanded from the government the restitution of those tribal land properties illegally confiscated as a punitive measure by Reza Shah. The tribe, whose "capital" is Firuzabad in the province of Fars, lives and wanders in the vicinity of Shiraz, but in this rebellion it extended its operations to the area adjacent to Isfahan. Trying first to settle the quarrel by diplomacy, the government sent General Firuz to negotiate with the rebels, but the mission failed. In June, 1943, the Qashqais inflicted a heavy defeat on the army, capturing the fort of Samirom and killing its garrison of 200 men including three colonels. Following this episode, the government once again resorted to diplomacy. By August, 1943, agreement was reached, and the rebellion died down. Negotiations with the rebels were conducted in co-operation with the British Legation. Major-General W. A. K. Fraser, British military attache,

was actually known to have been in touch with both sides in his attempts to bring about a peaceful solution.

The north was also a scene of tribal unrest. There the Kurdish tribes challenged government authority all through the war and frequently raided villages on the Azerbaijan Plateau, especially in the vicinity of Lake Urumia. In 1943 violent riots broke out in and around Rezaieh, and in 1944 Kurdistan suffered the turmoil of a large-scale revolt conducted by Hama Rashid. Eventually the rebellion was quelled, with the aid of some Kurdish tribes such as the Javanradi that co-operated with the government. Rashid saved himself by crossing the Iraqi border. He was to reappear after the end